

point in the future. Going into debt is no sin and no crime. Anybody who has purchased a home over time or a major appliance, an automobile, et cetera, understands that. In fact, it is encouraged.

The question is, are you able to pay? Can you acquire debt in such a way and such a manner and for such a length of time that enables those or that institution doing the lending to be reasonably sure you are going to be able to make the payment, be able to sustain the debt, and sustain your life and its requirements monetarily.

That is all this is about. I do not think that can be done in 7 years, but I am in the minority. I have been in legislative life in a State legislature, in the house of representatives at the State level and the State senate, in a city council, and in the Congress of the United States. I have been part of the board of directors of nonprofit organizations in many venues, Mr. Speaker. In other words, just about every community and electoral venue there is, I have participated in a legislative function where you had to deal with budgets, where you had to deal with coming to grips in most of those instances with balancing the budget.

I have participated both as the chairman of an authorizing committee and as a member of an appropriations committee in balancing budgets in every legislative venue. So this is not something strange and new to me. I have better than two decades of experience in this area. So I am quite willing to come to grips with the idea that I am in the minority on this floor with the question of the number of years that should be reasonably made available to deal with the balanced budget.

But I am not required, Mr. Speaker, simply because I am in the minority at the moment with respect to the numbers of years that would be required to do this, I am not required in that context to keep quiet about the fact that those who are putting forward a proposal that they can balance in 7 years cannot do it, and that to delude the American people, deliberately or otherwise, I am not trying to at this juncture cast some sort of aspersions on those who say they want to attempt it at least. All well and good, if that is what the proposition is.

If someone wants to come to the floor and say no, I do not think it can be done, or on paper it cannot be done in 7 years if we are being honest about it, and the word "honesty" has been used over and over and over again on this floor, we want honest numbers. If that is the case, fine. You want to make an attempt over 7 years to do it, possibly it could be done. I think it would entail the kind of cuts that would cause incredible pain to people in all kinds of areas.

Part of the pain that would come would come after 2002, after the 7-year period, when I am maintaining, and I think the burden of the rest of the article by Jodie Allen is that once you pass

2002, to the degree that you are able to achieve anywhere near the kind of goal that has been set in 1996 over that period of time, that 7-year period of time, there will be an explosion of debt, an explosion of indebtedness, an explosion of deficit spending.

One of the categories that would, I think, harm us the most would be in Social Security. The Allen article, again I am citing it because I wanted this to be an outside person. It justifies not NEIL ABERCROMBIE by standing up here and tossing out facts and figures as suit me and then could be dismissed as a result of simply being partisan, no matter how accurate it might be. I am citing these columns, and I am glad to see the Jodie Allens and some of the other people I am going to be citing are beginning to pick this commentary up. I will be going over that in greater detail in time to come.

Mr. Speaker, I believe my half hour is almost up. Let me conclude simply by saying that it is not a question of who wins the budget battle, it is a question of who loses. If the American people lose the budget battle, believe me, we all lose here politically. I hope in days to come to be able to shed a little more light on not only what the process is to this point, but what we can do about it in a practical way to bring a successful conclusion to this budget confrontation.

GETTING OUR FINANCIAL HOUSE IN ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman from Hawaii, and I thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is unusual to have a special order with such a seasoned veteran at the helm as Speaker. I thank you for your willingness to take this time from your busy schedule to allow the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. UPTON], and myself to make a few comments about what we have been faced with and what we will be facing in the months to come.

I would start by saying a lot of good people are leaving Congress, a lot of people I have tremendous respect for. One of their comments is they are leaving because it is not a fun place anymore; that there is some animosity between parties and among chambers. I was thinking, you know, the reason goes far more than that, because there is some disagreement that is quite significant.

But I contend that some of my colleagues who are leaving are leaving when we need them the most and when the heavy lifting has really begun. In a way, they are escaping the responsibility for dealing with the crisis that has just been pushed for that next Congress to deal with.

For decades we knew that we were getting ourselves deeper in a hole. At

the end of the Vietnam war, if I went to 1974, the national debt was about \$430 billion. That is the debt, not the deficits. That national debt has grown to \$4.9 trillion, a tenfold increase since the last great war. We have a tenfold increase since the last great war in Vietnam. It was not called a war, but it clearly was a major expenditure on the part of the United States.

So we fought the Revolutionary War, we fought the War of 1812, we actually fought the war with the pirates and their taking some of our sailors in the Mediterranean. We fought the Civil War, we fought the war with the Indians throughout the course of our history, the Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, Vietnam war, the Korean war, and we have a debt of \$435 billion. Then what happened? That debt has just gone up almost exponentially in the last 22 years.

I contend it has gone that way because both Republicans and Democrats have, for whatever reason, agreed that they would not give in on what they did not want to give in on. Democrats did not want to give in on the growth of entitlements, and some of my Republican colleagues did not want to give in on defense spending. They both agreed to deficit spend in the process. We find ourselves in a tremendously difficult situation with a lot of large debt, and now the heavy lifting begins.

We are taking on a lot of special interests, because this Republican majority, candidly, wants to get our financial house in order. Ultimately we can only succeed if the President wants to be part of that effort. He should be an equal partner to it.

The bottom line is we need to do some heavy lifting. So yes, this is not a fun place anymore. It is not a fun place because we are having to do some very significant effort.

I will just make a few more comments before I yield to my colleague from Michigan. Prime Minister Rabin, before he died, made it very clear that he was elected by adults to represent the children. I think that is a good message for all of us, we are elected by adults to represent the children. If we are concerned about the children, we have to be concerned about the national debt and the kind of burden we are placing on our children and our children's children.

So we are setting about to accomplish three major tasks: One is to get our financial house in order and balance our Federal budget in 7 years or less; another is to save our trust funds, particularly Medicare, from bankruptcy. I know my colleague at the chair, representing Florida, is representing so many constituents who in fact are receiving Medicare. This fund is going insolvent, Medicare part B is going insolvent this year. More money is going out of the fund than coming in from the payroll tax. We want to save the trust fund from insolvency.

The third thing we are eager to do is to transform this caretaking social and

corporate welfare state, it is just not welfare for the poor, it is welfare for corporations, and move it, transform it, into a caring, opportunity society, where everyone has an opportunity to succeed. It is not a hands-off, we do not care. It is a very much hands-on. But instead of giving the people the food, we want to give them the seed.

In the process of doing these three things, getting our financial house in order and balancing the budget, saving Medicare from bankruptcy and transforming the social and corporate welfare state into an opportunity society, we are talking about change.

In the process of this change, we have made a number of people who want the status quo, we are confronting them. I would contend rather than being critical of my colleagues, and particularly our freshmen, bless our freshmen's hearts, that we should be appreciative that these, many of them business men and women, said "I ran for this job to get our financial house in order. If I lose the next election, so be it. This is not my life. My country is my life, my family is my life, God is my life. But being here is not my life." They are willing to risk defeat in the process of doing something right.

So we have this special order just to talk about some of what we want to do and why we think it is so important.

With and I yield to my colleague from Michigan.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut, my good friend, for yielding during this special order. I must say a couple of things to begin with. One of the things I have said a lot as I have gone around my district and around the State of Michigan and here in Washington too is in this Chamber, sometimes it seems as though we have too many Republicans and too many Democrats, and not enough U.S. Congressmen and women willing to make some tough choices. We have got to do that. I am 42 years old. You and I are about the same age.

Mr. SHAYS. A little older.

Mr. UPTON. But, you know, back in 1980 when I first came to this town and worked for President Reagan, the baby-boom generation, our generation, was 30 years away from retirement. The deficit then was a lot smaller, the national debt was a lot smaller. The amount of interest that we paid on that debt was about \$50 billion.

Today, 15 years later, 16 years later, we are now 15 years away, our generation, from the big retirement age, with all the entitlement kick-ins and all of that, and we are not spending \$50 billion on interest, we are spending \$250 billion on interest, and the debt, not being \$1 trillion or so, is now actually over \$5 trillion, and in 2 years, we will be spending more just on the interest, servicing that \$5.5 trillion national debt, than all of defense, foreign aid, Congress and the Intelligence budgets put together.

We have got to make some tough choices. It is not easy to say no to

some of these different groups that are coming in. The easy vote is always yes. Somehow in this Chamber, working with the administration downtown, because we do not have the votes, let us face it, to override a veto, we have got to work together and bridge the gap to get the job done.

I have a 4-year-old and I have an 8-year-old, and a newborn child today is going to pay, their share of what we owe is \$185,000 in taxes just to pay the interest on the national debt. Somehow I think that it should be incumbent on everyone in this Chamber, as we think about our kids and their kids and this country, to work together in a bipartisan fashion to do a number of things.

First of all we have got to come up with a balanced budget. Why did our side pick 7 years? Because the markets, those folks running the markets say if it is not 6, 7, or 8 years, it is not going to be credible; you put it off in the future and no one will believe it.

We need declining deficits each and every year. None of this stuff where you have a straight line deficit, and then the last 2 years it falls off to zero. They have to be real, and they have to come down in benchmark fashion each and every year.

The other thing, we said this on our side and so has the President and the Democrats, is we have got to have an honest scoring mechanism, the Congressional Budget Office.

I want to share a story. Back in 1990, when President Bush was in office, you probably went down there, as well as I did. In fact on the budget agreement in 1990, President Bush, I spent a lot of time with him. I worked with him. I worked with President Reagan, as I said earlier, for a number of years. His office was around the corner when he was Vice President, and my office, I was in charge of congressional affairs at the Office of Management and Budget.

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President Bush called me down to his office and put his hands on my shoulders. He said: Fred, you can vote for this. You are going to get reelected. I have been to your district. I know you. You are going to win your race, and I need your vote for this. This is so important. We have the gulf war coming up, and we need to get this off the table and get this country on a sound fiscal basis.

And I said: Mr. President, I cannot vote for this because I did not run for office, and I do not feel in my heart that I can vote to increase spending and increase taxes, and that is what your budget does.

And as I look back at those numbers, back then, in 1990, in my notes, his statisticians told him if his budget passed, and it did, we would have a surplus in 1995 of \$63 billion. Well, they are off only by \$250 billion.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I have the other side of that story.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow those phony assumptions to come into place. That is why, as we make the tough decisions today, Medicaid, Medicare, what size of the tax cut, if any, that ought to be there, all the tough choices, we do not want to go through this drill again and come up \$250 billion off when we say it is going to be balanced.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I happen to have voted for the 1990 budget. I voted for it because I was willing to even vote for a tax increase where there was a slight tax increase to balance the budget. But I used those numbers that were done not by the Congressional Budget Office, but by the Office of Management and Budget, and they were basically the President's numbers. They were basically Dick Darman's numbers, the head of the budget office, and they simply turned out to be extraordinarily unrealistic.

I vowed that I would never ever again be unmindful of how the numbers were calculated, and that is why we want the President to be willing to use basically conservative numbers, certainly not numbers that just estimate ourselves out of the problem. What I did like about that budget agreement, and I think my colleague would agree it was an important part, Gramm-Rudman, which was a 5-year plan to get to a balanced budget and sequestered funds. In other words, if one did not reach one's deficit target, there would be automatic cuts. It only dealt with one-third of the budget. Appropriations. Half of the budget, though, are entitlements.

This gets me into the whole point of the challenge of balancing the budget. Our first task is to balance our Federal budget, and get our financial house in order. We cannot do it just looking at appropriations. I think my colleague in the chair would recognize that we have been squeezing what we call discretionary spending. We have been cutting back traditional government, but we have allowed the entitlements, in other words, someone who fits the category gets the money, Medicare, Medicaid, welfare, foods stamps and so on, certain agricultural subsidies. Fit it and get the money. That is on automatic pilot. It continues each and every year.

What the 1990 agreement did, one of the good parts, it said, if we increased the entitlement, we had to come up with the dollars to pay for it, either with a tax increase or a spending cut. What Congress had done to get around Gramm-Rudman was we squeezed the discretionary spending coming out of the Committee on Appropriations, and they increased the entitlement. They did not get it through an annual vote of Congress; they did it through a mandatory expenditure.

We are taking on entitlements. We are not cutting them. We are slowing the growth. One of the big criticisms is that we are doing cuts to the earned income tax credit, a very important program for the working poor. They pay

no taxes because they do not make enough. The Federal Government gives them something back to get them to get beyond that working-poor status.

We want to slow the growth of that program because under existing law that would go to \$35,000. We want to keep it around \$30,000, and we want it to apply to families and not to single individuals in particular. But we still allow that program to grow from \$19.9 billion to \$25.4 billion. That is an increase in spending; not a cut. We are changing the program but we are increasing spending.

The School Lunch Program, which was something that has always distressed me, and I bring it up when we have the opportunity, the President is going to schools and telling young children that they are not going to have a school lunch, when we are going to go from \$5.2 billion to \$6.8 billion. That is not a cut; that is an increase. We are allowing it to grow about 4.5 percent a year instead of 5.2.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, as I understand, it was a \$200 million increase each year for 5 years.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, whatever the numbers ultimately that have come through the addition of negotiations in the budget agreements that happened since, the bottom line is that we were spending hundreds of millions of dollars more each year and to get up to \$6.8 billion in the 7th year.

The student loan is the one that really gets me the most. We are going to allow that to grow from \$24.5 billion to \$36 billion. That is a 50-percent increase. It is not a cut; it is an increase.

We do something. We are saying to students they have to do something they have not done in the past. Present law is, when they graduate, for 6 months they pay no interest. The Government, taxpayers, pay the interest. Then what we have said is no, students will pay the interest not when they are in school; they pay no interest when they are in school. They will have a 6-month grace period when they pay no return on the loan. But 6 months on, they start to pay the loan back, and we amortize the interest as soon as they graduate. It is a 6-month period.

Ultimately, we are saying, yes, students are going to pay more. They still get the same loan. They are going to pay \$9 more a month. It is a movie and a Coke. It is a pizza. The bottom line is, it is something that a working person now, having graduated, can pay. It saves the taxpayer \$4 billion in the course of 7 years. We still allow that program to grow, though, notwithstanding, from \$24.5 billion to \$36 billion.

Mr. Speaker, just take two more numbers, and then I would like to yield back to my colleagues. On Medicare and Medicare, our numbers were \$89 billion; they grow to \$127 billion. Only in this place, and in the Senate, maybe at the White House, not maybe, but at the White House, really in this city, when we spend so much more, do people call it a cut.

Or in Medicare from \$178 billion to \$289 billion in the seventh year. This is the number that really gets me. We are going to allow for a significant increase in Medicare on a per beneficiary, per elderly citizen, they get an equivalent of \$4,800. In the seventh year that is going to grow to \$7,100 per beneficiary. All of our constituents, that is what they will get. Hardly a cut. A very definite increase.

We are looking to, what? Control the growth in spending. We spent \$9 billion in the last 7 years. We want to spend \$12 billion in the next 7. We just do not want to spend \$13.3 billion. We want to slow the growth in spending.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to my colleague, and then I notice my colleague from Delaware has come, and we can perhaps yield to him.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, it was about a year ago that this House first took up some of the contract items and passed a number of things the first day and the first month, certainly. As I recall, one of the things that we passed on the very first day was a change in the House rules to allow for honest budgeting.

As my colleague pointed out, school lunches are going up at least \$200 million each and every year. I can hardly wait next fall to go to the schools where they believe that school lunches are going to be over and sit down and have lunch with my fourth and fifth graders and say, "Oh, my gosh, we are still having lunch."

I signed some mail today, people complaining about Medicare cuts. It is going up any way you look at it, 50 percent over 7 years in the plan that we passed and the President vetoed. And it is going up on a per beneficiary basis by \$2,100.

But I thought it was in this House that it passed almost unanimously, not quite, 390-something to 12 or something like that, to use honest budget numbers. And what that meant to me was that we were not going to start looking at these things as cuts, unless they actually went down. Is it a violation of the House rules to talk about cuts when in fact they are going up?

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, the way this started, we are talking about a baseline, and we figured in inflation. Then we said last year, even though we spend more, it is not an increase in spending.

I remember when I was first elected in 1987, I would go back home and say, "We cut spending here and here and here," and my constituents would say, "If you cut spending, how come the spending keeps going up?" That was a very logical question, and I realized I was using that concept of a baseline budget.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, we changed the House rules, but we are not living up to them. Maybe we should get the mace out.

Mr. SHAYS. We are trying to. It is a different kind of mace. It is the mace you hold.

But bottom line, Mr. Speaker, we want to get our financial house in order and balance the budget.

I get into this whole issue of Medicare, which is really trying to save our trust funds. There is not a Member of Congress who does not represent a number of seniors, and we have had to talk to our constituents about this issue. It has been very interesting to me because what they want, we are giving them.

I, as a Member of Congress, pay 28 percent of my health care like any other Federal employee. I do not get anything other than any other Federal employee. I pay 28 percent, and the Government pays 72 percent. The wonderful thing is that we get choice. What do we do with Medicare is we do not increase the copayment or increase the deductible. We keep it at 31.5 percent; the taxpayers pay 68.5 percent, and we give choice. We allow recipients to join plans where they might get eye care, dental care, hearing aid assistance, where they might have their copayments paid for by an HMO if they choose to join an HMO, but they can stay where they are.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I would note that there is no decline in benefits. They cannot say no, they cannot blackball one from enlisting in any of the programs, and benefits cannot be cut. One has got to have at least a standard benefit package that is there today. It can only be broadened, not lessened.

Mr. SHAYS. The bottom line is the only private plans that can be offered are plans that offer something better, the same or better. But in order to get people into those private plans, they will have to be better; otherwise the people will stay in the fee for service.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield to the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE].

Mr. CASTLE. I thank the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] for this opportunity to just address for a few minutes the issues of budgeting and balancing the budget here in Congress.

One point I thought of as I was on my way over, and I hope my colleague did not make it because I was on my way over, is that there are so many Members of this House of Representatives, and actually the U.S. Senate as well, who are focusing on balancing the budget. It is not just JOHN KASICH, God love his soul. He is a wonderful person. Or NEWT GINGRICH and a few others. There are groups of moderate Republicans that we might belong to. There are groups of Blue Dog Republicans and Democrats that are conservative Republicans and Democrats. There are all kinds of groups in this Congress who realize how important it is, and I think sometimes we do not state that enough.

There is a view that maybe one or two leaders are trying to drive the need to balance the budget. The freshman class of the Republican Party has taken some lumps, but they came down

here with a concept to make Government more efficient. I think they deserve tremendous credit for that.

Then I hear the pundits and a lot of critics out there saying, well, Congress can never balance its budget because of entitlements and because of interest payments and various reasons. I say that is absolutely wrong.

I come from Delaware, and for 8 years Pete du Pont was Governor of Delaware. He was the one who made up his mind that we could balance the budget in Delaware. We had not done that, and then we did it. I was Governor for 8 years, during that period of time, and it continued on with Tom Carper, the Democratic Governor of the State of Delaware. We not only balanced our budget; we have had a series of tax cuts, and we have two rainy day funds on top of each other. We take care of almost every possibility in terms of being able to keep in balance from year to year, and I am absolutely convinced that it can be done.

I would tell my colleagues that there is a lot of protection, not just in this Congress, but by constituent groups on the outside, and particularly by the press, who try to protect the status quo. They do not welcome true innovation or change.

In just one area of tremendous concern, people will say to us, why do not you cut your salaries, and you can balance the budget? That is 100th of 1 percent of the budget. Or cut foreign aid. That is a small percent.

But get into Medicaid and Medicare, which is the fastest growing segment of the budget, 17 or 18 percent collectively between them now in the budget of the United States, and there is an area which has grown from zero about 30 years ago to where it is today, which is growing faster than everything else which we need to address.

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I do not know of any Member of Congress, if these seats were all filled, who would not say "I want health care for the poor and I want health care for our senior citizens." We all feel that way.

So the question is, how can you reduce those expenditures in those particular programs but still provide the health care. There is a very simple lesson. Look at today's newspapers. Today's newspapers brought us the news that there was a slight increase in the cost of health care to the private insurers last year. I think it was about 2 percent or something. When you had HMOs, it was actually a decrease in the amount they spent. When you had regular health care, it increased by about 2.5 percent or something of that nature. Yet, we have these Government programs which are still going up at the rates of 10 percent or 11 percent or 12 percent. That is well beyond population growth.

The truth of the matter is that we deliver health care at the Government level exactly the way we have done all along, and perhaps we should innovate.

There are innovations out there. There are HMO's. The medisave account is something which could work. We do not know that for sure. But if you are doing what some people have talked about doing here, I am sure they are going to cut into health care, and they might do some of the things you are talking about.

You can get your prescription eyeglasses, perhaps, or your pharmaceuticals which you need as part of the plan you get into because we let people expand and go to a market-based system. I am convinced we can do this same thing with welfare. We have done this in Delaware. We have basically told people they have to start going to school, that they had to get a job after a period of time. They started going to school.

I thought it was going to be a very difficult thing to do. We went down and visited these people, and they were perhaps the most contented citizens I visited in the whole time I was Governor. They were being given an opportunity. One-third of those people are working today, and one-third are off of welfare altogether as a result of that. That is a pretty good result. I would like it to be a 100 percent, we all would, but that is a pretty doggone good result.

But I think there are ways in which we can come up with creative and good opportunities for people to improve their lives and still provide the same services we have today, but do them in a different way, and balance our budget. Yes, we have to work at it, but there are a lot of experts in this room. I think given that opportunity, that could happen, and we could really do what we have to do, which is to balance the budget in 7 years. It is tough, but is not impossible. We should be doing it.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, the bottom line to this is that people have said, "Well, we got into this over 30 years. It should take us 30 years." No, we got into debt in 1 year. We are not looking to pay back the debt. We were simply saying, "Let us not make the debt any larger." So we have a 7-year plan. Frankly, a number of us here have said, "Let us balance the budget sooner with no tax cut," but the issue is ultimately balancing the budget, getting our financial house in order.

Mr. Speaker, we are not paying back that debt, we are simply saying, "Let us not make the debt any larger." When you talk about the innovation, we have seen extraordinary innovation on the State level. You were a Governor for 8 years. I can remember that we looked at how you did it when we were in the State of Connecticut, because Delaware was doing innovative programs. We looked at what Tennessee is doing and what Arizona is doing with managed health care for nursing care and so on.

Why is it that the working American basically is under managed care, but the elderly, who are under taxpayer expense, and the poor, who are under tax-

payer expense, are under the traditional old system of fee-for-service? We are still going to allow them to have fee-for-service, but we are eager to encourage them to get into plans that save money and are more efficient and provide better service.

Mr. Speaker, we could talk about a lot of issues, and we are basically, I think, running out of time in the next few minutes. We have about 3 minutes. I would be delighted to yield to my colleague, the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. UPTON. I would just like to make this point, Mr. Speaker. As I look at my State of Michigan, a few years ago we had a debt of about almost \$2 billion, which is a lot for any State. Our Governor and our legislature went after spending, tightened everybody's belts. Today they have cut taxes 23 times in the last 3 years. We can do the same here, but we have to focus on the spending side. We have to do something about deficits that average somewhere between \$150 billion and \$250 billion over the last couple years, and we have to do it together. That means this side of the aisle and this side of the aisle working together to get the job done, and really get the budget balanced.

Mr. CASTLE. If the gentleman will continue to yield, just briefly, I could not agree with the gentleman more. I worry a little bit when I read in the press that some of the leadership here in both houses and even the White House are beginning to say, "I do not think we can get to a balanced budget." I certainly have not given up on that. I think this is the time to do it.

People do not realize how close we are. We have really narrowed the differences. Yes, there are some policy differences that need to be resolved as well, but from a numbers point of view, we are as close as they have ever been to do this. I think to give up on it now would be a huge mistake. I hope we push hard in the remaining weeks of this spring and hopefully get this done sometime before we go too much further into the fiscal year.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank my colleague for making this point. The bottom line is we have an extraordinary opportunity. We want to seize this opportunity and we want to work together with the President, who came in with a very conciliatory message, I thought, and with our colleagues on the other side. But we want them to be real numbers, we want there to be structural change in the program. We want to save this country for future generations.

IMPLICATIONS OF FRANCE'S NUCLEAR TESTING NIGHTMARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YOUNG of Florida). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, January 29, 3 short days before he is to arrive in Washington,